



# SCOTT AFB NEWS

*UNITED STATES AIR FORCE*

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## **Privatization brings innovation to housing**

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Following in the footsteps of several bases like Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio and Robins AFB, Ga., Scott AFB is moving to privatize all 1,430 base housing units and build approximately 165 units as early as 2005. This will bring military members quality affordable housing in a much shorter time than traditional military family housing construction funding allows.

The goal of the privatization project is to provide military families access to safe, quality, affordable and well-maintained housing. A private contractor will finance, plan, design and construct improvements, as well as own and operate the rental housing for 50 years.

“The shortage of quality affordable housing available to military service members and their families has reached a point where quality of life and hence recruitment; retention and readiness are at risk,” said Col Shelley Christian, Commander, 375th Mission Support Group commander. “Quality housing that is affordable is important to morale. In addition, airmen want to be assured that their families are safe and taken care of when they deploy.

This will require change and a totally different mindset for our airmen in how they pay their rent, how they use their utilities, and how they receive maintenance, but these changes are necessary to reach our quality of life goals, said Colonel Christian.

Today, more than 50 percent of Air Force family housing does not meet modern standards and requires either major improvement or replacement. The benefits of privatization will be bigger, better housing units built faster than with traditional military construction methods, which traditionally took 25 to 30 years to get housing in line with standards.

“The new housing units will be single family, two-car garage units and duplexes with single-car garages. Other amenities will include dishwashers, garbage disposals, and storage areas – built to community and Air Force standards,” said Lt. Col. Stephen Shea, base civil engineer. Required features will include garages with openers and expanded storage space, washer and dryer hookups, four-burner stoves, and high-energy heating and cooling equipment.

The goal of the Air Force is for the development to be as transparent as possible to housing residents while maintaining the traditional military community.

“Housing residents should notice no change in their finances. Rent and utilities will be fully covered through Basic Housing Allowance being paid automatically through allotment. Though, they will experience some change in how their housing units are managed and repaired,” said Lieutenant Colonel Shea.

The Air Force has about 103,000 houses in its inventory, worldwide, according to Binks Franklin, chief of Air Force housing program management. So far, privatization contracts have been awarded or are underway at Lackland and Dyess Air Force Bases in Texas; Robins AFB, Ga.; and Elmendorf AFB, Alaska – for a total of 2,320 units. Privatization is also under way at Kirtland AFB, N.M.; Patrick AFB, Fla.; Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; Little Rock AFB, Ark.; and Hickam AFB, Hawaii, which will affect another 6,134 homes. Construction (check on this—Dover has a huge overage of houses) of another 6,049 units is underway at Dover AFB, Del.; Hill AFB, Utah; Moody AFB, Ga.; Altus AFB, Okla.; Lackland AFB; and Offutt AFB, Neb. Over 13,827 homes at 15 other bases joined the privatization process last year.

The initiative to privatize all housing units here began last year when DoD tasked the Air Force to upgrade all required inadequate housing by fiscal year 2007.

Due to the results of the Housing Requirements and Market Analysis, Scott AFB will privatize all 1,430 housing units and acquire an additional 120 to 165 new units to satisfy the housing shortage.

“Some units may be built off base in the local community. This will provide military members who do not want to live on base, but desire all the benefits of living in a secure, affordable military neighborhood, additional choices that suit their housing needs,” said Colonel Christian.

Colonel Barbara Faulkenberry will host a townhall meeting in February to discuss specific details about privatization. You may also access the following website to learn more: <http://www.afcee.brooks.af.mil/cc/ccp/news/>. (*Information obtained from American Forces Press Services and Air Combat Command News Service*)